

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 NEA-10 DPW-01 IO-14 AID-20

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19

DRC-01 SSO-00 /182 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9604

INFO CINCPAC

USDEL PARIS

S E C R E T SAIGON 20406

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI PINS PINT VS

SUBJ: MONTHLY MR-1 COMMANDERS' CONFERENCE

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

HEREWITH REPEAT OF AMCONSUL DANANG MSG 1237 ACTION AMEMB
SAIGONINFO AMCONSUL BIEN HOA, AMCONSUL CAN THO, AMCONSUL
NHATRANG, USDAO SAIGON FYI:

QUOTE

1. ON NOVEMBER 30, LT. GEN. NGO QUANG TRUONG, COMMANDING
GENERAL OF MR-1/I CORPS, CHAIRED THE MONTHLY COMMANDERS'
CONFERENCE. SINCE LT. GEN. DONG VAN KHUYEN, CHIEF OF THE CENTRAL
LOGISTICS COMMAND, WAS PRESENT, MUCH OF THE BRIEFING CONCERNED
SUPPLY PROBLEMS. DIVISION COMMANDERS NOTED NUMEROUS SHORTAGES,
AMONG WHICH WERE VEHICLE SPARE PARTS, BULLDOZERS, COMPASSES,
WARM CLOTHING, POL SUPPLIES FOR MAINTENANCE, ENTRENCHING
TOOLS AND AIR TRANSPORTATION. LT. GEN. KHUYEN OFFERED
EXPLANATIONS OR PROMPT ASSISTANCE CONCERNING ALL THESE ITEMS
AND EMPHASIZED THE NEED TO REDUCE USE OF OFFICIAL VEHICLES

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AND THUS CONSERVE GASOLINE.

2. MUCH OF LT. GEN. TRUONG'S COMMENT WAS CENTERED ON THE NEED TO MAKE THE BEST USE OF THE TIME AVAILABLE BEFORE AN ENEMY OFFENSIVE MATERIALIZES. VC INFRASTRUCTURE IS TO BE THOROUGHLY ELIMINATED IN SMALL DESIGNATED AREAS THROUGH WELL PLANNED AND COORDINATED OPERATIONS. TRUONG INSISTED THAT THE MAJOR ENEMYSPHREAHSWOULD CONTINUE TO BE ARTILLERY. NORTH VIETNAMESE AIRCRAFT WILL NOT POSE A SERIOUS MILITARY PROBLEM, BUT THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT, IF THE SOLIDERS AND POPULACE ARE NBP PREPARED, COULD BE GRAVE. IN ANY CASE, THE PROPER RESPONSE IS TO DIG TRENCH SYSTEMS AND FOXHOLES.

3. GEN. TRUONG HAS BEEN PLACING TERRITORIAL FORCES ON THE FRONT LINE AND WITHDRAWING THE MARINES AND AIRBORNE TO FORM A MOBILE RESERVE. THEREFORE HE INSISTE ETHAT CPL PF AND RF SOLDIERS HAVE A SHOVEL AND USE IT TO CONSTRUCT NOT ONLY SOLID FRONT LINE, BUT ALSO SECONDARY AND TERTIARY POSITIONS TO WHICH THEY CAN WITHDRAW. HE DISPUTED LT. GEN. KHUYEN'S THESIS THAT ONE SHOVEL FOR 3 PF WAS SUFFICIENT. IF PROPERLY DUG IN, THE MEN SHOULD NOT FLEE TO Q.L. 1. IF THEY DO, OFFICERS ARE AUTHORIZED TO SHOOT THEM.

4. THE GENERAL ORDERED THAT TROOPS BE THOROUGHLY TRAINED IN ANTI-TANK TECHNIQUES, THAT INTELLIGENCE REPORTING BE IMPROVED, AND THAT RADIO SECURITY PROCEDURES BE ENFORCED. COMMANDERS ARE TO PREPARE CONTINGENCY PLANS NOW TO EVACUATE THE CIVILIAN POPULATION SHOULD AN OFFENSIVE OCCUR.

5. GEN. TRUONG SAID THAT THE BATTLES WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN MR-2 CAN BE EXPECTED IN MR-1 AS WELL. HE SUPPORTED RETALIATION FOR ENEMY CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS, BUT IN A MANNER CALCULATED TO DO REAL HARM TO THE ENEMY--NOT NECESSARILY AT THE SITE OF THE ENEMY ATTACK. HE CRITICIZED G-2 FOR NOT YET HAVING SELECTED POSSIBLE TARGETS FOR RETALIATORY OPERATIONS. THESE OPERATIONS WILL BE CAREFULLY PLANNED AND, IF NECESSARY, DELAYED UNTIL GVN RESOURCES ARE PROPERLY MARSHALLED.

6. TRUONG FOCUSED SHARPLY ON SEVERAL SHORTCOMINGS: RICE DISTRIBUTION (OF WHIC HE SAID, "IF WE CANNOT SOLVE THIS PROBLEM, WE CANNOT HOPE TO SOLVE THE OTHERS"), UNIT DISCIPLINE,

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AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION BY MILITARY UNITS (WHICH HE FORBADE EXCEPT FOR SMALL VEGETABLE PLOTS WORKED BY INDIVIDUAL SOLDIERS IN THEIR FREE TIME), DRAFT DODGING, AND INFLATED UNIT STRENGTH FIGURES. HE DISPATCHED AN OFFICER TO INVESTIGATE RF AND PF ROSTERS IN THE FIELD, AND PROMISED THAT SECTOR COMMANDERS WOULD BE PUNISHED IF UNITS WERE FOUND SERIOUSLY UNDER DECLARED STRENGTH. HE PROMISED ALSO THAT HE WOULD SUPPORT HIS

COMMANDERS IF THEY NEEDED TO MAKE PERSONNEL CHANGES TO IMPROVE
THEIR UNITS.

7. TEXTS OF THE G-2, AND G-3 BRIEFINGS AS WELL AS DISCUSSIONS
OF AIR DEFENSE PRECUATIONS AND BLACK MARKET TRADING OF
MILITARY GOODS HAVE BEEN POUCHED TO THE EMBASSY.

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